

The fact is more and more recognized that the Indian in his tribal state was not without a system of education suited to his needs. The young men were trained in adventure, endurance, and skill. The young women were trained in making the camp and in keeping it in order, in providing fuel, and in tanning, and dressing skins and making them into articles of clothing. In other words, the Indian youth was taught the things he needed to know in order to protect himself and to provide for his physical needs with due regard to the prevailing conditions of his environment. While the chief aim of his education was to enable him to get a living just as the chief aim of our education is to give us knowledge and the ability to make a living, still we should not overlook the fact that the Indians' system of education did not neglect cultural training. His tribal ceremonies, tribal lore, tribal art, tribal handicrafts, and his native music are all evidences of his appreciation of the cultural side of life. While he constantly emphasized the individualistic point of view, he also pursued cultural occupations for the satisfaction they afforded; he developed skill and courage for the purpose of advancing his personal standing in the tribe; and he acquired a knowledge of tribal ceremonies for the sake of individual salvation and influence over others.

This individualistic aim of education was necessarily narrow and selfish. It tended to subordinate the welfare of the whole to the advancement of the individual. The progress of the tribe as a whole was not definitely planned and sought. The Indian under his tribal organization did not reach the state of conscious evolution. He was content to pursue the even tenor of his way with little thought of

social progress or efficiency.

In our policy of absorbing the Indian into the body politic of the Nation, the aim of his education must be broad enough to include both the welfare of the individual and the good of society. We must also take into account the development of those abilities with which he is peculiarly endowed and which have come down to him as a racial heritage - his religion, art, deftness of hand, and his sensitive, esthetic temperament.

The course of study for Indian schools provides, through its prevocational and vocational courses, for educating the Indian youth along practical lines. The best part of all human knowledge has come through the five senses - the sense of sight, hearing, taste, smell, and touch - and the most important part of education has always been the training of those senses through which that best part of knowledge comes. The faculty of accurate observation, the acquisition of skill in doing, and the habit of careful observation, reflection, and measured reasoning are best acquired through the proper training of the senses. The opportunities enjoyed by the boy on a farm for training eye, ear, and mind; the discipline and motor training of the fundamental trades, such as those of the carpenter, blacksmith, mason, painter, plumber, etc., for boys; and practical courses in domestic science, domestic art, housekeeping, hospital nursing, etc., for girls, are recognized by the leading educators of the day as affording the best training possible for secondary schools, and they are characteristic features of the curriculum for Indian schools.

The central idea of the course of study for Indian schools is the elimination of needless studies and the employment of a natural system of instruction built out of actual activities in industry, esthetics, civics, and community interests. The development of the all-round efficient citizen is the dominating feature. So we are now teaching the Indian boys and girls to design and make beautiful and useful things with their hands; to study and understand the practical application of the laws of nature, and to apply and appreciate art in the cooking and serving of a meal, in the making and fitting of a garment, and in the furnishing and decorating of homes; in designing and making useful tools and furniture, in building convenient, comfortable, and sanitary houses, or in making two ears of corn grow where only one grew before.

Nor is the cultural side of the Indian child's education neglected. The larger schools have literary societies, religious organizations, brass bands, orchestras, choirs, athletic clubs, physical culture classes, art classes, and various other student organizations and enterprises for promoting cultural training.

Educators everywhere are more and more recognizing the fact that the conventional curriculum of the ordinary school is an accumulation of years of custom, and that there is all too much of non-essentials and unprofitable repetition in the elementary courses. Especially is this true as to the subjects of geography, arithmetic, history, physiology, etc. For a long time these subjects were usually taken up in the primary grades in simple form and repeated in the intermediate and grammar grades with slight modification and in a little different language. Such repetition is not calculated to arouse the enthusiasm of the average boy or girl, and it is a

waste of time to require a pupil to go over and over the same subject through two, three, or four grades in the usual perfunctory way without much serious consideration as to the aim to be attained or the motive.

As to non-essentials, it is a saving of time and expense to leave them out and thus make room for more practical and useful subjects. For example, in arithmetic, such subjects as powers and roots, ratios and average, approximations, divisibility, foreign money, metric system, partial payments, duodecimals, stocks and bonds, etc., have been eliminated from the course of study for Indian schools.

As the Government Indian schools constitute an independent educational system they are at liberty to deviate from the conventional and fit their courses of study to conform to the needs of their pupils.

With studies properly adjusted to the pupils' needs and with non-essentials and useless repetition eliminated, it is possible to provide daily three to four hours of productive industrial work on the farm, in the shops, or in the various domestic departments of the schools without serious handicap to the academic work. Along with this productive work is given definite, systematic instruction, so that the pupil learns the theory while acquiring skill in doing.

The chief educational value of any sort of productive work lies in the plan employed in organizing and supervising the work and in logical, definite, systematic method of giving the class instruction. Experience has demonstrated that no teacher ever becomes so proficient that definite lesson plans are not essential to the best results.

The course of study for Indian schools requires that all teachers, both academic and industrial, prepare daily lesson outlines and follow them as closely as possible.

In addition to the primary and prevocational courses, vocational courses are provided in agriculture, mechanic arts, and home economics.

In agriculture the aim is to produce not a specialist but a practical, capable farmer whose success will depend largely on his skill in doing. In the mechanic arts the purpose is to help a boy find himself; if inclined to craftsmanship, to select the trade for which he seems best fitted, and to give to him such knowledge and training as will enable him after leaving school to become through experience and further study a skilled workman capable of being a foreman or manager.

Special effort is made in the home economics course to train girls to become model housewives and mothers in the community to which they will return. This work is practical rather than idealistic, and is conducted with the home of the farmer or workman of moderate means in mind, and with a view to fitting Indian girls for making their future homes pleasant.

The academic instruction is correlated closely with this industrial and domestic training, and it all begins in an elementary way in most of the 175 day schools for Indian children, where usually each school is conducted by a man and his wife, as teacher and housekeeper, respectively, and has a garden plot and some facilities for teaching boys the use of a few tools and girls the simpler elements of household work. This form of school carries civilization to the great mass of Indians instead of other types of schools which carry a few Indians to civilization. The influence of these schools, planted almost at the door of Indian homes, is not limited to the children alone, but reaches out to the parents and entire community, and every day leaves its permanent mark. It becomes, when properly equipped, managed, and in the hands of competent teachers, the center of



community interests. All kinds of helpful activities in farming, dairying, gardening, stockraising, cooking, canning, sewing, nursing, household management and sanitation, may be and are being introduced into these communities.

The reservation boarding schools enroll children from the first to the sixth grade inclusive. Their work parallels in all academic features that of the public schools, but introduces in the last three years much prevocational training practically essential to the domestic and industrial life of the rural home. In their home training girls have regular instruction and practice in cooking, sewing, laundering, nursing, and poultry raising. Boys are given agricultural courses and practice in farming which includes stock raising, plant production, care of implements, roads and grounds, and dairying, together with such knowledge of carpentry, painting, masonry, blacksmithing, engineering, etc., as is ordinarily needed on a farm. All pupils are taught gardening.

This instruction and practice in the art of doing the essential things required in the daily life of those who must later support themselves is further much enlarged in the non-reservation boarding schools, some of which continue vocational work through the 8th grade, but six of the larger give four year vocational courses above the 6th grade, and one gives six years. In this school two years of normal training and two years of business training are offered. The work of all boarding schools is thoroughly systematized, and the pupils are under such control as to acquire the most useful education possible within the time allotted, while those who complete the higher vocational training are equal, and in some respects superior in qualification to the graduates from public high schools.

In Government Indian schools a large amount of productive work not only affords the practical training desired, but is necessary to the proper support of the schools, as they could not possibly be maintained on the legislative appropriations hitherto provided. In fact at many of the boarding schools much of the upkeep labor requiring some knowledge of mechanics is performed by the students, in addition to the farming, gardening, dairying, and other activities which yield considerable subsistence and occasionally a marketable surplus.

As a result of this practical training there are many hundreds of young men among the Indians who can, if necessary, shoe a horse and repair its harness, set a wagon tire, lay a concrete walk, and even build a respectable sort of a house, and there are as many young Indian women who can do successfully any kind of house work, care for their children according to the more sanitary and hygienic practice of modern living and give to their homes a touch of art and comfort that makes them attractive and worthy of imitation.

This product of the schools, asserting itself in the new generation, is not returning to the "blanket life," as sometimes carelessly reported. Such criticism will apply to only a negligible percentage. As a rule, the returned student is the leadership and substantial civilizer of the red race, and undoubtedly the greatest reconstructive force that can be employed to that end.

The literary work of advanced students in the various boarding schools compares favorably with that of the best public high schools and would often do credit to collegiate training. These young men and women take great interest in American history and general literature, and keep

posted on current events through periodicals with which the school reading rooms are generally well supplied. They prepare theses on historical, social, and many live subjects, and their discussion of questions in debate shows a wide range of investigation, including scientific information and a good grasp of political issues. In these literary societies they, of course, gain a knowledge of parliamentary usage and orderly procedure, with much in the way of initiative and self-reliance.

In all school work prominence is given to moral training and definite time is set apart for instruction in manners and right conduct. Every teacher is urged to be true to the moral element in personal example and class room methods. General regulations for religious worship, applicable to every Government school, provide for the attendance of pupils at Sunday school and church, and superintendents are expected to see that impartial privileges are extended to all Christian denominations. In the preparation of the Indians for citizenship nothing is placed above character building.

Any outline of Indian educational work must not omit its health-promoting activities. In fact the health of the pupil is the first purpose, and the daily routine of the boarding school as to balanced diet, bathing, calisthenics, sleeping facilities, periodical weighing and examination of pupils, supervised nursing supplied by the Indian girls, and many other features, furnishes an organized system throughout the school year for the formation of health habits, and the boys and girls to a large extent retain these habits in after years. Two of the most obstinate diseases known, tuberculosis and trachoma, which in the past have spread unspeakable havoc among the Indians, are now practically eliminated from Indian boarding schools.



There are now maintained for the Indians 85 hospitals and sanitarium having a capacity of over 2,000, in which approximately 17,000 patients are treated annually and for the same period over 66,000 adults and children are given health examination. Actively connected with this health work are about 200 physicians and a like number of field and hospital matrons, nurses, and assistants whose efforts are coordinated for the prevention and cure of disease, the care of infants and mothers, and the general hygienic and social improvement of Indian homes.

The existing day and boarding school system has demonstrated very effectively its value and adaptation to the needs of Indian boys and girls. Its results are now unmistakable and the best argument for its continuance through some years to come. It has enabled the Indian to make greater progress than any other pagan race in a like period of which there is any written record. Wherever found, on the reservations or in the many occupations of business and the professions, Indian school graduates reveal a new understanding of the world about them, of the dignity of labor, the rewards of honest industry, the pleasures and blessings of cultured home and family relations, the satisfactions of provident living, and the aspiration to have their children educated and successful.

Moreover, nearly as many Indian children are now in public schools as in Government, mission, and private schools. This is desirable and is encouraged whenever conditions reasonably permit. Tuition is paid for such attendance in the case of children of Indians who pay no taxes, and special

effort is made to cooperate with all state public school officials to secure increased attendance. The results are especially successful in the case of mixed-bloods who do not invite race prejudice, and a great economic advantage is in the release of public funds for the extension of school facilities in districts where the Indians are largely full-bloods and few public schools are established.

OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS.

1921.